



## The Eurodoc 2009 conference

### Innovations in Europe: From Academia to Practice and Back

The annual Eurodoc conference took place from March 26 till March 28, 2009 in Banská Bystrica, Slovakia. This major European gathering of young researchers and policy makers was co-organised by ADS, the Slovak Association of Doctorands, and SKRVŠ, the Czech Association of Doctoral Candidates. Eurodoc is the voice of doctoral candidates and young researchers in Europe; it is a permanent partner of the European Commission with regard to the European Research Area and the European Higher Education. This year's event was of significant importance since for the first time in Eurodoc's existence it was held in one of the new member states of the European Union. The subject of this year's conference was 'Innovations in Europe: From Academia to Practice and Back'.

After the opening speeches of the rector of Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica, Beata Kosová, and the city's vice-major, Róbert Kazík the first plenary session with as topic "Academia in the Era of Knowledge Based Economy" started. The keynote speakers in this session were the Slovak Republic's Deputy Prime Minister for Knowledge-Based Society Dušan Čaplovič, the General Director of the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic Peter Plavčan, the Deputy Director-General of the DG Research of the European Commission Anneli Pauli and Jean-Patrick Connerade, Emiritus Professor of the Imperial College in London and well-known expert on the field of higher education and research.

The Eurodoc delegates and other participants discussed - during roundtables and workshops - policy recommendations on 'Doctoral Programmes in Europe – Their Role in a Knowledge-Based Economy', 'Fostering Cooperation Between University and Industry', 'Success Stories of Intersectorial Mobility - Doctoral Candidates' Views', 'Lisbon Strategy and Innovation Policy within the EU' and 'The Role of Universities in the Innovative Economy'. The conference finished with a plenary session in which also the impact of the current world wide economic crisis on the funding of education and research was discussed.

The most important conclusion of the conference is that in order to reach the Lisbon and Bologna aims 'action' is needed. The Member States and the institutions were provided with a theoretical framework. It is up to them to put theory into practice. However until now little of these improvements have been implemented; only small steps have been taken and this in a fragmented and random way. In order to achieve the aims of the Lisbon/Bologna process, political will, political pressure and funding is needed. Eurodoc is determined to contribute to this process by, amongst others, developing practical policies that can easily be adopted and implemented like its 'Five Principles and Recommendations towards a More Open European Labour Market for Researchers'.

Moreover, to make policy on doctoral researchers work, policy makers should know what young researchers think and want. Thus it is of the utmost importance that policy makers on all levels (local, regional, national, and international) involve young researchers when drafting and implementing policies that affect these young researchers. This conference re-assured the status of Eurodoc as key partner and main voice of young researchers on the European level. Therefore we call on the European Union to grant Eurodoc an even stronger position within the the ERA and EHEA.

The next Eurodoc Conference will take place in Vienna on March 11-15, 2010. The conference theme will be "Stocktaking and Prospects: Doctoral Training and Research – the Link between EHEA and ERA".

## **EURODOC background:**

EURODOC was founded in Girona (Spain) on 02/02/02. It is the European Council of doctoral candidates and young researchers. It takes the form of a federation of national associations of PhD candidates and young researchers.

EURODOC's objectives are:

- To represent doctoral candidates and junior researchers at the European level in matters of education, research, and professional development of their careers.
  - To advance the quality of doctoral programmes and the standards of research activity in Europe.
  - To promote the circulation of information on issues regarding young researchers; organize events, take part in debates and assist in the elaboration of policies about Higher Education and Research in Europe.
  - To establish and promote co-operation between national associations representing doctoral candidates and junior researchers within Europe.
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## **Contact:**

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